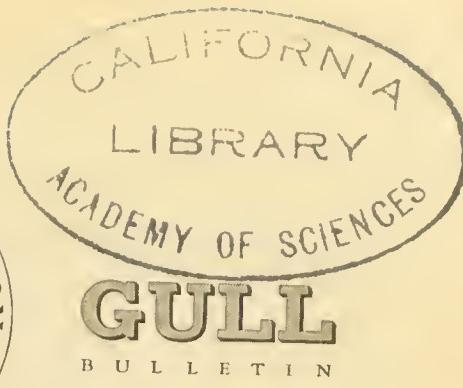


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THE
M O N T H L Y



VOLUME 6

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, APRIL, 1924

NUMBER 4

APRIL MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, 10th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Assembly Hall of the Public Library, corner of McAllister and Larkin Sts. Take elevator to third floor. Car lines No. 5 or No. 19.

Dr. Casey A. Wood, on the eve of his departure for the east, has kindly consented to spare the Association an evening and will tell us of "Some Birds of the Fiji Islands," as observed by him during his sojourn there, last year. Dr. Wood's lecture will be illustrated with lantern slides only just arrived from the Antipodes. Visitors will be made welcome.

* * *

APRIL FIELD TRIP will be taken on Sunday, April 13th, to the ridges back of Sausalito. From the summit an extensive view is obtained and the route of return will be decided by the temper of the party at the time. This innovation is due to the quarantine still in force throughout areas in the East Bay Counties occupied by dairy herds. The party will traverse a varied habitat and the scenery is particularly fine.

Purchase round trip tickets to Sausalito, (thirty cents), and take ferry boat leaving Market St. ferry building at 8:45 a. m. There is water on the ridge. Those preferring to do so, may reach Sausalito by way of the Golden Gate ferry from the foot of Hyde St. and join the party not later than 9:20 at the ticket office in the railway ferry house.

* * *

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MARCH MEETING: The eighty-sixth regular meeting of the Association was held on March 13th, in the Assembly Hall of the San Francisco Public Library, with President Kibbe in the chair; Mrs. Carl R. Smith, Secretary; ten members and eight guests in attendance.

At the suggestion of Miss Pettit, a resolution was adopted, offering to the Commissioners of Golden Gate Park the services of the Association in furnishing lists of wild birds frequenting the park, to be incorporated into a publication about to be issued by the Commissioners, wherein lists will be given of the flowers and trees to be found in that area.

The feature of the evening consisted of a lecture by Dr. Tracy I. Storer, Honorary President of the Association, on the subject of "The Body Covering of Birds." The details of structure, arrangement and function of each class of feathery and hairy growth were systematically described to the enlightenment and pleasure of those present.

* * *

DEUS EX MACHINA

The country is again suffering from what might be termed an amateur attempt at readjustment of the balance of nature. We of the San Francisco Bay region are just recovering from the ill-advised action of a bird-lover in offering a bounty for the slaughter of one of our useful and valued birds, the sparrow hawk. Mistaken and illegal and outrageous as this was, its author bore the entire expense and was inspired by no motive of personal gain.

Under the auspices of the E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc., as set forth by its Assistant Director of Sales, Sporting Powder Division, a so-called "International Crow-Shooting Contest" is under way throughout the United States and Canada, under the virtuous guise of ridding the country of the greatest possible numbers of some nineteen species of mammal, bird and reptile, to which the title of "Vermin" has been applied; by what specific license is not stated. Prizes aggregating \$2500, on a sliding scale of credits, are offered to the 79 individuals and 210 teams making the highest scores,—*"where permitted by state laws."*

Modern salesmanship has ceased to be concerned with the problem of furnishing to a customer what he requires or desires. No salesman can hold his job unless he develops a knack of loading a customer down with a lot of stuff which he neither needs nor wishes. As if life were not sufficiently full of terrors during the hunting season, the *duty* is enjoined upon sportsmen to keep banging away throughout the closed season in the hope of winning a picayune prize.

There are three extremely serious objections to this procedure, serious enough to cause even a Director of Sales to take stock of himself before he launches his employers upon so parlous a project.

First: In every state numbers of competent scientists are devoting their time to studies of the economic relations to man and to each other, of all of the subdivisions of animal and vegetable life. Man's ill-considered interference with the balance of nature has wrought heavy and irremediable damage in many parts of the earth. The solution of these problems is slow. It must be slow. The results of these studies are defined and incorporated into our laws from time to time. A powder manufacturer is no disinterested student, no competent judge to pass sentence upon any animal which may be interfering with its profits.

Second: An organization of the calibre and standing of the du Pont de Nemours Co. should cherish its reputation for complying with the law. It is incumbent upon it that it should advise itself upon this point before inciting a multitude of people to actions which may be violations of law. It is illegal for anyone to shoot a crow, snowy owl, kingfisher or goshawk in California, except an owner or tenant of any premises where such birds are found destroying berries, fruit or crops growing on such premises, and, even so, *the birds may not legally be shipped or sold*. To compete in this contest, portions of each bird must be shipped and sold to agents of the powder company.

Third: But even if all of the animals listed in the prize offer were "vermin" and harmful, and even where it is legal to destroy them, the overwhelming objection to such a contest lies in the fact that it will inevitably operate to aggravate the very damage for which it is fatuously offered as a remedy. The contest has been staged, *in the sole interest of the powder maker*, for the obvious object of increasing sales during the off-season, in the period between March and June 15th, the nesting season for the song, insectivorous and game birds for which solicitude is expressed. No one can measure the damage resulting to these birds through violation of the quiet so essential to them at such time; through accidental destruction of their nests, not to mention the temptation to intentional destruction through greed or mischief.

The Association is in receipt of emphatic protests from bird-lovers near and far, against this ill-advised and outrageous proposition. The Biological Survey reports that "A careful study of the economic status of the crow demonstrates that over much of its range the bird probably does as much good as harm and under some conditions its usefulness is pronounced."

Every real sportsman will wish to be a sportsman all the year around, and not simply during the open season. He cannot be a sportsman unless he gives the birds the full benefit of the closed season.

A. S. KIBBE.

PUBLIC SHOOTING GROUNDS—GAME REFUGE BILL

Misapprehension and lack of careful consideration of all phases of the migratory bird problem have led to some criticism of this project which are not justified and will be dispelled by a little further thought.

Wise conservation, practicable conservation, seeks not merely to save. The conservation of our timber resources does not involve the arbitrary preservation of every tree in the world. If it did, why should we save up something of which we could make no use? Laws which prohibited the taking of any game would soon defeat themselves by their own rigor, or by the inordinate increase in the cost of enforcing them or by the impossibility of enforcing them. In the long run, a game law must be rational and must justify the cost of its enforcement. Nature is lavish, but she requires time and opportunity to balance consumption with production. Game laws are designed to effect this adjustment.

Migratory birds are threatened by two major dangers, indiscriminate shooting and disappearance of appropriate habitat for rest and for breeding purposes. The original title of the bill in question expressed its objects with exactitude. Those who think only of shooting as long as there is something at which to shoot, will take no interest in the *refuge* feature. Those who consider only the preservation of the birds will object to the *shooting*. But the two are in a sense complementary. We must have the refuges, if we are to have any birds left, and properly controlled shooting will not destroy the balance and it will furnish the funds necessary to acquire and operate the refuge grounds.

Comparatively few people realize the extent to which areas which formerly furnished natural refuge and breeding grounds have been modified by reclamation. Enormous marshes which once supported countless hordes of birds in the San Joaquin Valley have been drained and the available water utilized for irrigation until we have either territory under cultivation, which the birds cannot use or wet areas from which so much of the water has been removed that the remaining pools are so alkaline as to be deadly to birds that drink from them. In southern Oregon, large marshy areas have been drained under real estate promotions with the result that the reclaimed lands are worthless for agricultural purposes and they can no longer support the birds which formerly bred there in enormous numbers. Other areas were threatened with like futile schemes and were only partially saved by the insistence of the Biological Survey Bureau. Similar processes have had like effects throughout the range of migratory fowl in this country and all we have to do to lose the birds is to let matters take their present course.

Almost anyone can appreciate the impossibility of acquiring the areas necessary for the preservation of these birds by governmental purchase, control and operation at the general public expense. The cost of acquisition would steadily increase and with it, the difficulty of securing appropriations for these objects, and there would be no direct income whatever.

The bill as proposed involves only a small initial appropriation to enable a start to be made, and this money is to be returned to the Treasury out of the income to be derived from Federal shooting licenses, which will not supersede the various state licenses, but will be required in addition to them. The shooting in these areas will be carefully regulated and adjusted to the capacities in all cases and it is the estimate and expectation of the proponents that the income will be ample to make the system self-supporting and to furnish the money for further acquisitions. In many instances land will be donated by the owners, when it is understood that it will be administered by competent experts in the public interest, as distinguished from that of a private club.

THE GULL

The bill missed passage by only a small margin during the last session of Congress. State Game Commissions have come to its support. Audubon and other conservational organizations are heartily in accord with the plan and the Bureau of Biological Survey enthusiastically indorses it as a measure vital to the preservation of our migratory birds and to keeping faith with Canada in the operation of the existing treaty for such purpose. It deserves the support of every bird lover.

A. S. KIBBE.

* * *

MARCH FIELD TRIP was taken on Sunday, the 16th, to Lakes Alpine, Lagunitas and Phoenix. The party left the train at Landsdale for the purpose of viewing the beautifully developed side-hill gardens of Mr. J. Frank Wadsworth, a short distance west from the station. Infinite labor, vigilance and skill have combined to flood the hillside with a mass of beauty, terrace after terrace cunningly supported by concrete walls, with a pool midway up the slope. The temptation to loiter was finally overcome and we skirted the ridge to the west, coming down to the Bolinas road in the outskirts of Fairfax. This was followed to the point where the old grade branched off and the usual course was pursued to Bon Tempe. After lunch the upper end of Alpine Lake was visited and the party spread out for the stretch to Lake Lagunitas.

The feature of the day was awaiting us at this beautiful stretch of water, where a flock of some two hundred band-tailed pigeons passed overhead in three or four sections. A portion of the party made the circuit of the lake and the Fish Grade was then followed to Ross, passing Phoenix Lake.

Birds encountered were: Western and pied-billed grebes, glaucous-winged, western, California and Bonaparte gulls; cormorant, pintail, canvas-back, scaup, surf scoter and ruddy duck; black-crowned night heron, coots, band-tailed pigeon and turkey vulture; red-tailed and sparrow hawks, Harris woodpecker, flicker. Anna and Allen hummers; western flycatcher, horned lark, coast and California jays; crow, meadowlark, purple finch, willow and green-backed goldfinches and pine siskin; San Francisco and California towhees, northern violet-green swallow, Hutton vireo, lutescent and Townsend warblers; pipit, Vigors wren, creeper and chickadee; bush and wrentits, ruby-crowned kinglet and hermit thrush. Forty-six species.

Members in attendance were: Mesdemoiselles Cohen and Harcourt; Mesdames Hall, Kelly, Kibbe, Mexia and Witt; Messrs. Elmore, Grueningen and Kibbe; Amanda and Henri Eric Jacobs. As guests, Mesdemoiselles Wennstrom and Zeile; Messrs. Goldman, Myer and Troy; Eugene Clark, Felix Jacobs, Carlos and Emilio Lastreto and another Scout. Twelve members and ten guests.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

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Meets second Thursday of each month, at 8:00 p.m., in Assembly Hall of San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets.

Address Bulletin correspondence to President.

Subscription to Bulletin alone, 35c per year.

Single copies 5c